

Teacher Pensions, Summer Jobs, Free Food & Why Green Is The New Grey!

This week sees the conclusion of this summer's Golden Ticket competition, where the winner will receive £3,000!! For every 50 questions you answered in the past three months you will have automatically received one entry into the competition. Each ticket is in the app and, when you click through, shows a three-word code.

We'll announce the winning code this week, via email and social media, so be sure to check your app to see if you're a lucky winner and claim your prize.

One of Teacher Tapp's big benefits is that we have answers from 2017 to now. But are there any real changes over time? We've found a few...

Can you afford your job?

Over the years we've tried to get teachers to check your pensions more often. When you do, about half find something wrong. And it's much easier to solve issues sooner than later – so please, check again this summer!

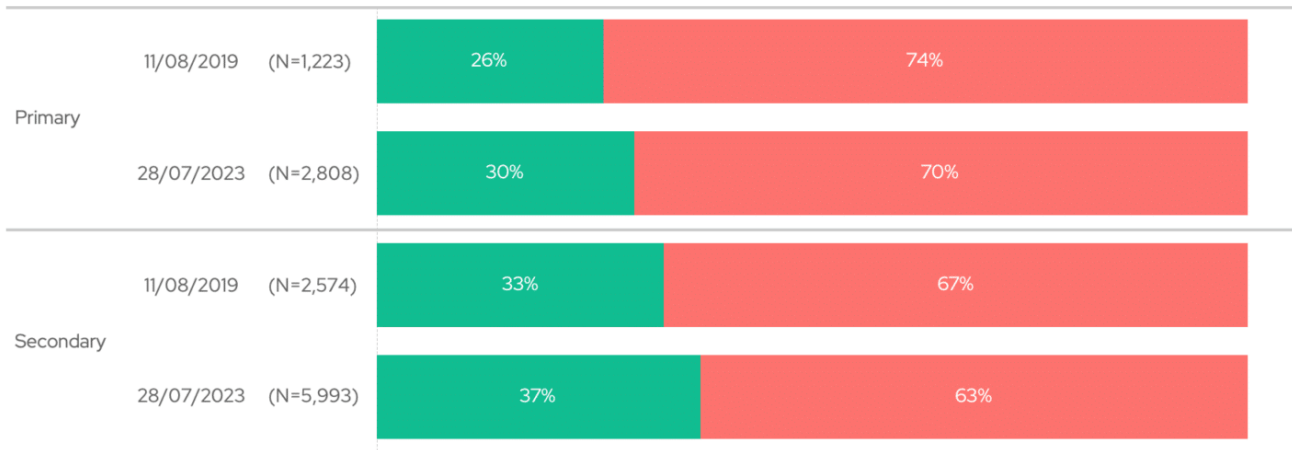
One theory is that because pensions are expensive (upwards of 9% of salary) then more people will be withdrawing due to cost of living crises.

So far, however, our figures are not showing huge changes. Most of you are staying in the pension (which given how lucrative it is, is a good idea). The opt-out rate remains at approximately 2-3%, as it was in 2019 and 2021.

We do have an error margin error of 1-2%, though, and even a 1% change is still 5,000 teachers, so it could well be there are small shifts going on, but our data isn't sensitive enough to spot them. Huge changes are unlikely, though.

What we are seeing, however, is people increasingly reducing their hours or job roles to take less pay in order to improve their well-being. More primary and secondary teachers are reporting doing this now than in 2019.

Have you ever taken a pay cut as a teacher (e.g. by changing job role or school) to improve your well-being?

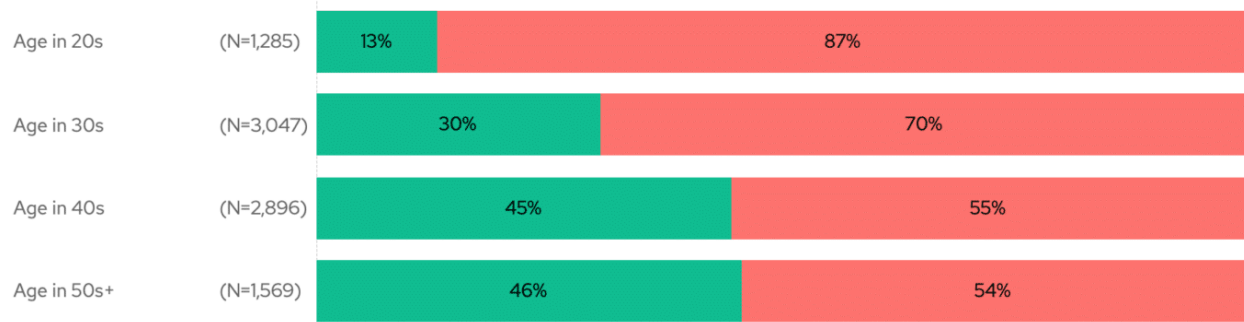


Teacher responses vary from 3,797 to 8,801, depending on date asked (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

■ Yes
■ No

It is almost entirely older teachers who are doing this. We don't have straightforward data as to why – hunches include more caring responsibilities; more likely to be in promoted roles that can be reduced; more likely to have paid off mortgage; partner earning more money.

Have you ever taken a pay cut as a teacher (e.g. by changing job role or school) to improve your well-being?



Question answered by 8,797 teachers on 28/07/2023 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

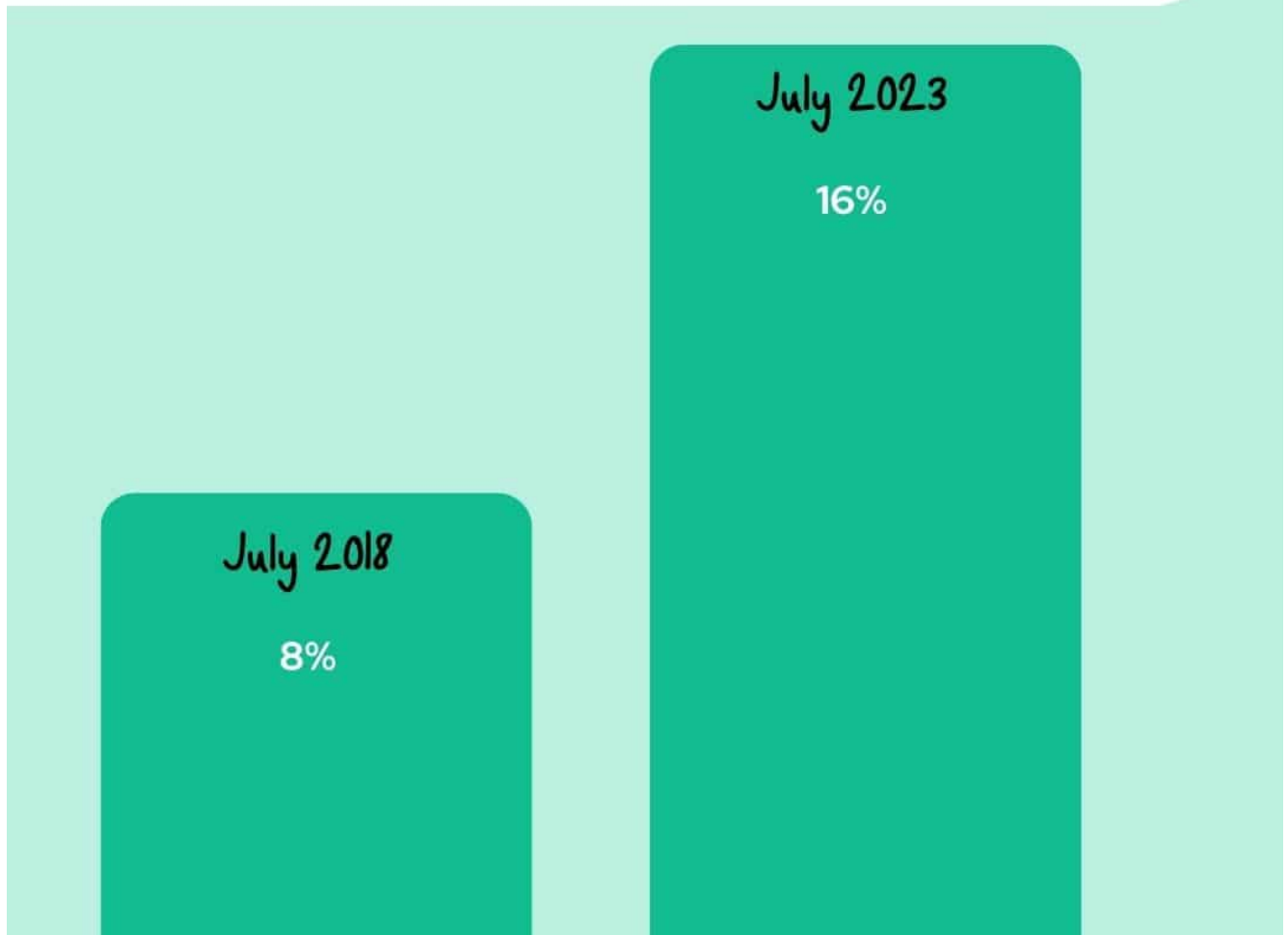
■ Yes
■ No

Another trends is that more teachers are also taking paid work over the summer. In 2018, just 8% of teachers did paid summer work. This year, 14% are doing a paid summer job – which is a substantial increase.

When looking only at classroom teachers, the figure goes up to 16% (up from 8% in 2018).

We asked classroom teachers.....

Will you be undertaking paid work this summer (beyond your teaching job)?



Classroom Set Up: Green is the new Grey

The Teacher Tapp genie was busy last week, asking lots of questions about your ideal school life.

Over the years we are increasingly seeing a preference for students sitting in rows facing the front.

In Secondary schools, it's gone from 61% to 68% and in primary from 23% to 30%. (Although that's mainly KS2, as EYFS/KS1 rarely pick this approach).

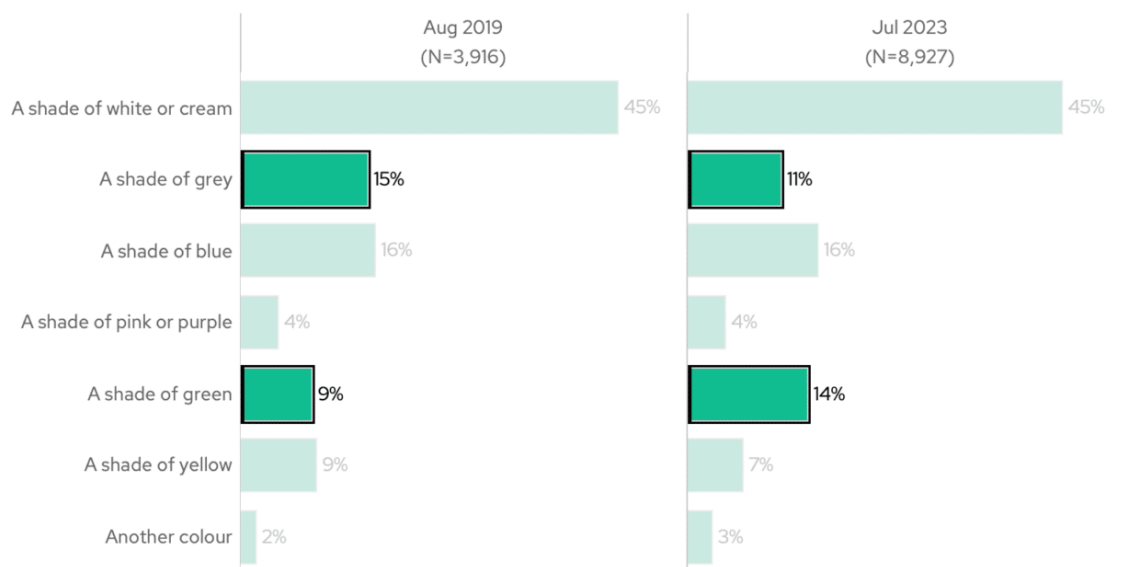
One other genuine trend: there is a growing love for the colour green over grey!

White is still the preferred classroom colour, but while grey was in third place in 2019(15%) it

has dropped back against green which has sprung forward from 9% to 14%.

If nothing else, this is likely telling us that there's a change taste in home decor - time to update your cushions!

And the genie is back again... this time, they will paint your classroom for you! What colour would you like it to be in September?



Teacher responses vary from 3,916 to 8,927, depending on date asked (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

LA vs. Academies

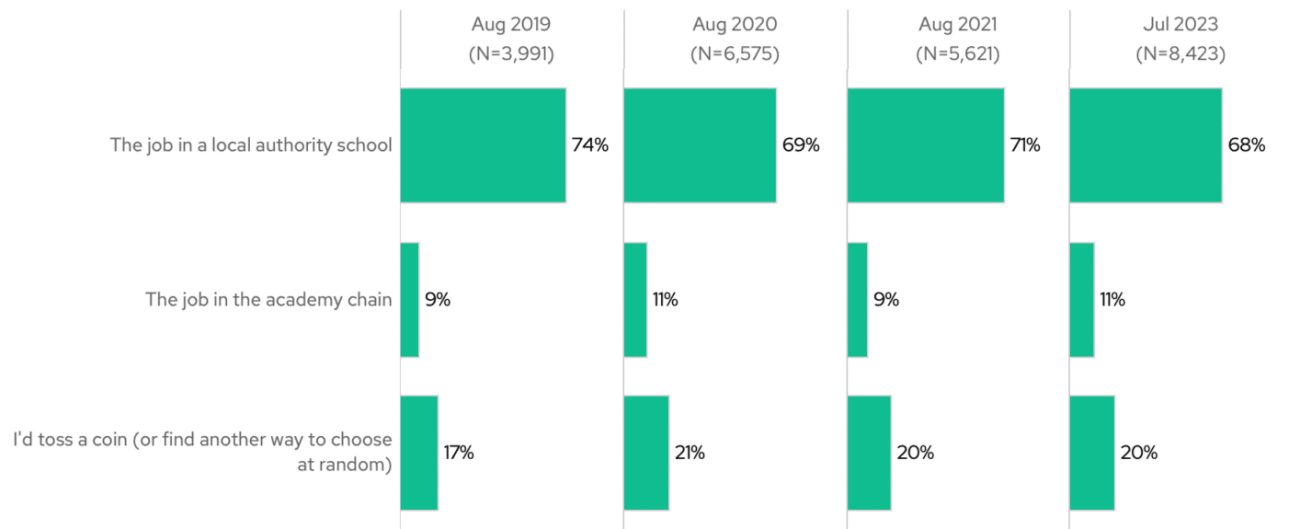
Once upon a time the majority of schools in England were overseen by local authorities. If you wanted a job, you simply picked one of these council 'maintained' schools and that was that.

Now, about half of schools are 'academies', overseen by charitable trusts. And if you're a secondary teacher, over 90% of schools you can work in are academies.

But who do people prefer to work for?

From the off, we found that council/LA schools were preferred and, although this preference has reduced a little, it hasn't been by much. All things equal, 68% of teachers would prefer a job in a local authority school.

You have moved to a new area and are offered a job at two schools close to your new home. One is a local authority school and the other belongs to an academy chain that you do not know much about – otherwise they seem to be pretty identical. Which job do you take?

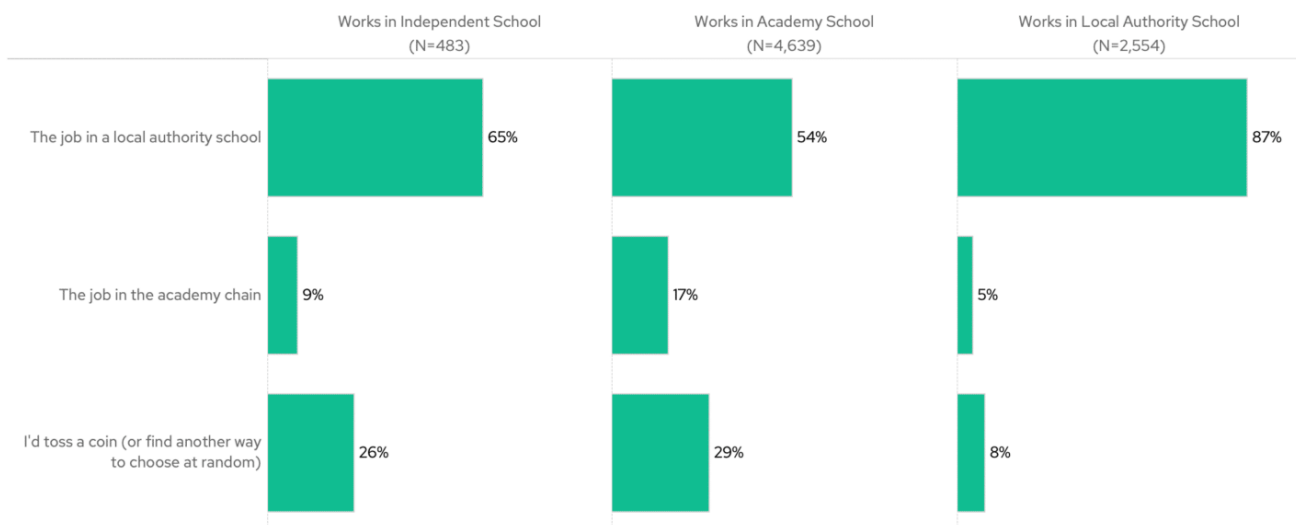


Teacher responses vary from 3,991 to 8,423, depending on date asked (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

How much of the preference is mediated by familiarity? If you work in an academy are you happier working in one?

It matters a bit, but not that much. A majority of people (54%) working in academies still say that, all else equal, they would prefer to work in an LA school. Some have been won over by academy life: 17% say they would pick to work in an academy. But mainly they shift to being ambivalent, with 28% of teachers in academies saying they'd pick randomly (which suggests they don't really care).

You have moved to a new area and are offered a job at two schools close to your new home. One is a local authority school and the other belongs to an academy chain that you do not know much about – otherwise they seem to be pretty identical. Which job do you take?



Question answered by teachers on 29/07/2023 (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

All of this should be disconcerting for academy chains, especially secondary ones facing staff shortages. Many of the large trusts are already aware of the problem and so are trying to promote the benefits of working in their chain – especially around professional development opportunities. This may be why we see a slightly better attitude towards academies from middle and senior leaders, but even among that group, LA schools win out by far. In any case, there's a long way for academies to go to rehabilitate the brand as a great place to work.

Changing Teacher Desires

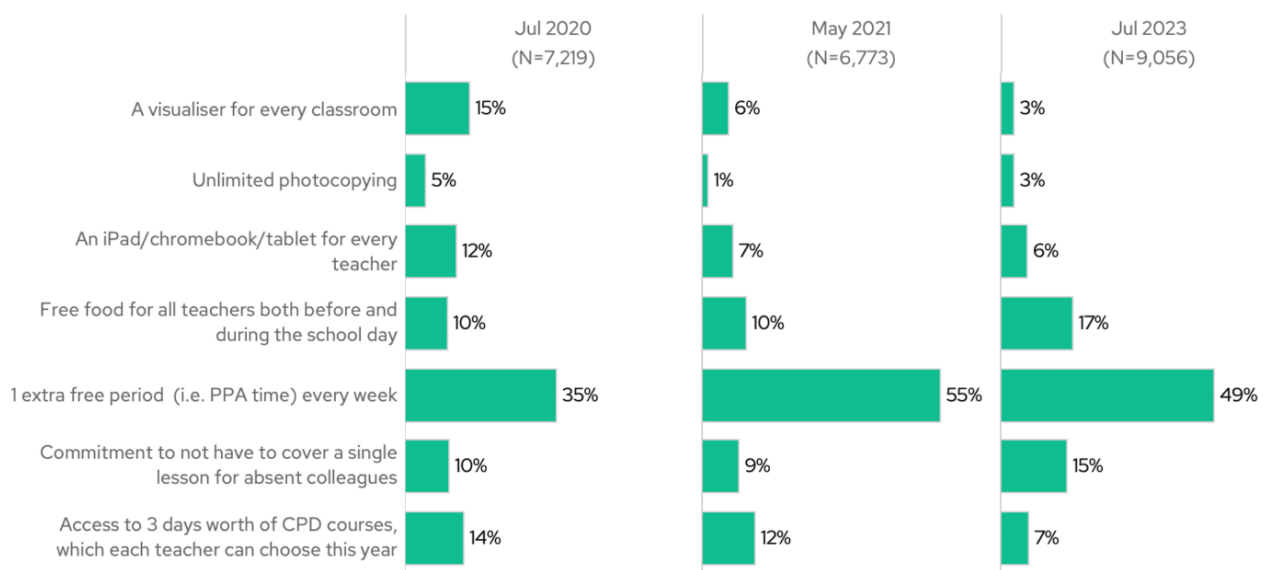
Finally, we asked our annual question about what you'd like a genie to give every single teacher in your school...

Going up: Free food, 1 extra PPA and a promise of no cover

Going down: CPD time, technology, resources (eg photocopying)

Food has particularly grown – from 10% to 17%. Schools who are thinking of cutting free breakfasts or lunches for staff may want to think again. It could be a very welcome benefit at the moment.

A genie appears and offers to give every single teacher in your school one thing free of charge for the next academic year. Which would you choose for them?



Teacher responses vary from 6,773 to 9,056, depending on date asked (results weighted to reflect national teacher and school demographics)

Ups and Downs

On the rise

■ Lesson observations among subject leaders. As if there's not enough to do, 77% of subject leaders are now also doing lesson observations, up from 69% in Feb 2022.

Heading down

■ ■ Checking emails during holidays. This year only 39% of you will be regularly checking emails over the summer, down from 43% last year. The fall was most substantial in primary schools – 46% down to 40%.

■ ■ Love for the six week summer break. Teachers have always had diverse thoughts on the structure of holidays, but love for the six week summer break is down this year. In an ideal world only 33% of you would keep it, down from 38% in 2020.

■ ■ Teaching and learning responsibilities. Fewer of you have received a TLR payment in the past year. (17% this academic year, compared to 21% last year)

And finally...

The most read tip this week was on: [KS4 subject difficulty](#)

And here are the rest for your reference:

- [Navigating the start of the summer holidays](#)
- [Knowledge or comprehension strategies, which should we teach?](#)
- ['Stepping stones' and how they can help through complex tasks](#)
- [Are more autonomous teachers more effective?](#)
- [9 questions to improve pupil metacognition](#)